



## Austin, Texas's Bicycle Friendly Community application

**Name of Community:**

Austin, Texas

**Mayor or top elected official in municipality:**

Mayor Will Wynn

**Contact First Name:**

Annick

**Contact Last Name:**

Beaudet

**Position:**

Bicycle Program Manager

**Employer:**

City of Austin

**Address:**

P.O. Box 1088

**City:**

Austin

**State:**

TX

**Zip:**

78767

**Phone:**

512-974-6505

**Fax:** (not required)

512-974-7222

**Email:**

annick.beaudet@ci.austin.tx.us

**Website:** (not required)

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/bicycle/>

**Population:**

718912

**Square mileage of municipality, Total Area:**

302.00

**Square mileage of municipality, Water Area:**

7.00

**Square mileage of municipality, Land Area:**

295.00

**Population Density:**

2439.00

**Average temperature for January:**

50.20

**Average temperature for April:**

68.30

**Average temperature for July:**

84.20

**Average temperature for October:**

70.60

**Average precipitation for January:**

1.89

**Average precipitation for April:**

2.51

**Average precipitation for July:**

1.97

**Average precipitation for October:**

3.97

**Median Income:**

42689

**Age distribution, % under 20:**

26.50

**Age distribution, % 20 - 64:**

66.90

**Age distribution, % 65 - 84:**

5.80

**Age distribution, % 85+:**

0.90

**Race, % Hispanic or Latino :**

30.50

**Race, % Not Hispanic or Latino:**

69.50

**Race, % One race:**

97.00

**Race, % White:**

65.40

**Race, % Black or African American:**

10.00

**Race, % American Indian and Alaska Native:**

0.60

**Race, % Asian:**

4.70

**Race, % Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander:**

0.10

**Race, % Some other race:**

16.20

**Race, % Two or more races:**

**If you have Journey-to-Work census data on bicycling to work, what percentage of people in your community bike to work?**

3.68

**How many households are within 1/4 mile of a retail or business area?**

Most

**How many neighborhoods have significant grass, flowers, and trees?**

All

**How many neighborhoods have significant amenities such as parks, water fountains, benches, and public art?**

All

**How many neighborhoods in your community would you consider a good place to raise children?**

All

**Do you have a Bicycle Master Plan?**

Yes

**Do you have a written bicycle accommodation policy?**

Yes

**What was your community's most significant investment for bicycling in the past year?**

The City of Austin's November 2006 General Bond Election included \$2 million in bicycle specific funding. Texas Department of Transportation stated intent to dedicate an existing roadway/bridge facility to a bicycle/pedestrian only bridge to be owned and maintained by the City, as part of the Lance Armstrong Bikeway.

**List current community activities that encourage/promote bicycling.**

The following bicycling related non-profit associations encourage/promote bicycling year round: Austin Cycling Association, Austin Ridge Riders, Austin Flyers, and Team Hotel San Jose. In January 2007 the Mayor of Austin initiated a bicyclist safety task force (named the Street Smarts Task Force) to encourage/promote bicycling and educate bicyclist and motorist to create a more harmonious existence between the two. Austin is home to the following recreational bike rides which promote bicycling: The Ride for the Roses, The MS 150 Bike Tour, The Jingle Bell Ride, New Year's Day - The Ride Around the City, The AMLI Downtown Criterium Race, The Austin Tri-Cyclist Saturday Morning Ride, and the Austin Flyers Sunday Morning Ride (open to riders of all levels, starting in an urban area with a loop out to the Hill Country and back). In addition, the City of Austin offers monthly League of American Bicyclist Road 1 Course and the Austin area Metropolitan Planning Organization sponsors a Commute Solutions Program, which promotes bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation.

**List your official bicycle/pedestrian coordinator or bicycle issues contact person on government staff.**

Annick Beaudet, AICP

**What department is the bicycle coordinator located in?**

Public Works

**How many hours are spent per year in this capacity?**

7500

**List all other government staff or contractors whose primary duties are devoted to bicycling issues.**

Richard Mower - Bicycle Engineering Technician, Eric Dusza - Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner, Diane Rice - Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Manager, Louis Lindsey - Project Manager, Mike Curtis - Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager

**Do you have a Bicycle Advisory Committee, Ped/Bike Council or other venue for citizen input?**

Yes

**List the name of the Chair and their contact information.**

Tommy Eden (512) 440-1433, [tommy\\_eden@hotmail.com](mailto:tommy_eden@hotmail.com)

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## Engineering Section

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**Do you have a policy that requires the accommodation of cyclists in all new road construction and reconstruction and resurfacing?**

Yes

**Provided policy**

Your accomodation policy is on file, [click here](#) to view it.

**Have you provided training for your engineers and planners on how to accommodate cyclists?**

Yes

**Description**

Engineers and planners in Austin are proactive in self education regarding bicycle facilities. In addition, engineers routinely attend the American Planning Association, Congress for the New Urbanism, and Institute of Transportation Engineers conferences to acknowledge best practices in transportation including bicycle transportation.

**Is there a mechanism to provide training on an on-going basis?**

Yes

**How many bridges are in your community?**

10

**How many are closed or inaccessible to cyclists?**

None

**Of those accessible by bike, how many have shoulders, bike lanes, wide curb lanes, or multi-use paths?**

Shoulder = 2, Bike Lanes = 1, Wide Curb Lanes = 4, Multi-use Path = 6

**Do you have a bike parking ordinance?**

Yes

**Provided policy**

Your ordinance is on file, [click here](#) to view it.

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Schools?**

All

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Libraries?**

All

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Transit Stations?**

All

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Recreation Centers?**

All

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Government Buildings?**

Most

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Office Buildings?**

Most

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Retail Centers?**

Most

**Are there bike racks or storage units at Public Spaces and Parks?**

Most

**Are buses equipped with bike racks?**

All

**Can bikes be brought inside transit vehicles?**

Yes

**Please describe any restrictions**

Planned commuter rail to start service 2009; cars will include bike racks.

**How many miles of bike lanes do you have?**

80

**How many miles of bike lanes are in your bicycle master plan?**

250

**What is the mileage of your total road network?**

2324

**What percent of arterial streets have bike lanes or paved shoulders?**

60

**How many miles of designated bike routes do you have?**

653

**How many miles of signed bike routes are in your bicycle master plan?**

490

**Please describe any maintenance programs or policies that ensure bike lanes and shoulders remain usable.**

**Routine maintainance:**

The bicycle hotline established in the early 1990's has evolved into a more sophisticated customer service response system. All bicycle requests for maintenance are responded to within 24 hours. The City of Austin has a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Department of Transportation for shoulder spot sweeping for state roadways within the City of Austin.

**Capital Improvements:**

Bicycle specific bond funding utilized to match a federal grant for a multiyear contract with a private sweeping company to maintain/clear bike lanes and shoulders. The contract has expired, however we have incorporated it into existing City services.

**Please describe initiatives your community has taken to ensure or improve bicycle access, safety and convenience at intersections, including bicycle detection, signing and marking.**

Federal grant received to install bike sensitive signal detectors and symbol stencils to show cyclists where to locate to trigger traffic signal. We routinely install MUTCD approved bicycle regulatory signs where appropriate to enhance bicycle safety. We provide routine maintenance of bicycle routes signs and markings. We have a sophisticated system for responding to bicycle lane maintenance needs.

**How many miles of paved or hard surface trails do you have?**

80

**How many miles of paved or hard surface trails are in your bicycle master plan?**

5

**How many miles of natural surface trails do you have?**

80

**How many miles of natural surface trails are open to mountain bikes?**

64

**What is the estimated acreage of open space and public lands within the community (city, county, state, and federal public lands)?**

42300

**Are these area open to cyclists?**

Most

**Please describe any maintenance programs or policies for multi-use paths.****Routine maintainance:**

Our Parks Department maintains all multi-use paths.

**Capital Improvements:**

Our Parks Department is mostly funded by citizen approved bonds. They maintain a fleet of alternative fuel maintenance vehicles for trail maintenance, which supports the spirit of the Austin Bicycle Plan by protecting the environment while maintaining the trails.

**Does your community have an ordinance or local code requirement for employers to provide bicycle parking, shower facilities, etc.?**

Yes

**Provided ordinance**

Your ordinance is on file, [click here](#) to view it.

**Describe recreational facilities for cyclists such as a low traffic rural roads and signed routes.**

Lance Armstrong Bikeway, The Austin Veloway, Town Lake Hike and Bike Trail, Barton Creek Greenbelt

**Are there other facilities that have been created to promote bicycling in your community?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe:**

The Austin Veloway, 9th Street BMX Park, Mansfield Dam Loop, Lance Armstrong Bikeway, Old Texas Highway 20 Route

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**Education Section**

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**How do you educate motorists to share the road with cyclists? Please describe:**

Mayor's Street Smart Task Force - goal to create a harmonious between all users of Austin's roadways. Be Kind to Cyclists is a nonprofit organization dedicated to provide information and education in hopes that people will have a better understanding of the changes necessary to make our streets safer for everyone. City of Austin Municipal Court mandates the LCI motorist course to motorist cited for illegal behavior towards cyclist (at judges discretion). Various websites including but not limited to the City of Austin Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, Texas Bicycle Coalition, and Austin Cycling Association. In 1994-1996 the City of Austin and University of Texas at Austin partnered and established a Bicycle Defensive Driving Course. Cyclist receiving a citation for a moving violation could take the course to have the ticket waived and receive a free helmet. City of Austin installation of Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices bicycle "Share the Road" signs.

**How many community motorists do you reach with these efforts?**

Some

**Are there other bicycle education opportunities for adults?**

Yes

**Please describe**

LCI instructors. The Austin Cycling Association provides educational riding opportunities for adults.

**Do you have a bicycle safety program for children in schools?**

Yes

**Please describe**

Don't Kid in Safety. Past effort included the Super Cyclist Program.

**How many schools participate?**

86 out of 86

**What other types of bicycle safety and education opportunities are available for children?**

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts provide bicycle safety training.

**How many children participate?**

Most

**Do you make bicycle safety materials available to the public?**

Yes

**Please describe**

City of Austin Bicycle map contains a plethora of bicycle safety information. In 1997-1999 the City of Austin Bicycle Program distributed 1000 blinking rear bicycle lights. The City of Austin defensive driving (required every two years for all 10,000+ City employees) program distribute the Austin Bicycle map to participants.

**Do you have a bicycle ambassador program that educates community members on local opportunities for bicycling and answers their questions?**

Yes

**Do you have League Cycling Instructors in your area?**

Yes

**Please list their names:**

Doug Ballew, Joe Cahill, Robert Farr, Joan Gaedke, Lisa Groesz, Russell Hahn, Phil Hallmark, Robin Hendershot, Laura King, Mike Librik, Gilbert D. Martinez, Marc R. Miller, Bob Schaefer, Casey Seeboth, Robin Stallings, Jeff Thorne, Stanton Truxillo, Preston Tyree, Gary Walker, April Watkins

**Is bicycle safety education included in routine local activities (e.g. tax renewal, drivers licensing and testing, or inserts with utility bills each month)?**

Yes

**Please describe**

Upon driving license testing each applicant receives the Texas Driving Handbook, Chapter 13 is dedicated to bicycle safety information. Austin routinely provides bicycle safety education during Bicycle Austin Month (occurring yearly for at least the last 12 years). The City of Austin Energy Utility Department (Austin Energy) routinely sends bicycle information out in utilities bills each month.

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Encouragement Section

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**How do you promote National Bike Month in May (or another month)?**

The Austin Cycling Association in conjunction with other bicycle advocacy groups promotes Bicycle Austin Month each May. It is relevant to note that prior to 1997, National Bike Month was recognized by Bicycle Austin Week and was expanded to the entire the month in 1998 and continues today.

**How many people do you reach with events and activities during this celebration?**

65000

**Do you actively promote Bike to Work Day or other bicycle commuting incentive programs?**

Yes

**Please describe**

The metropolitan planning organization promotes bike commuting through their Commute Solutions Program. The City of Austin actively promotes Bike to Work Day throughout the organization.

**What portion of the community workforce do you reach?**

Some

**Is there an annual bike tour or ride promoted to the general public in your community?**

Yes

**Please describe**

Ride for the Roses - Lance Armstrong Foundation Ride, MS 150 - Austin to Houston Bike Tour, The Shiner Ride (90 mile ride from Austin to Shiner, TX), New Years Day Tour of the City.

**Are there community road and mountain bike clubs, bicycle advocacy organizations or racing clubs?**

Yes

**Please describe**

Austin Cycling Association, Austin Ridge Riders, Austin Flyers, Team Hotel San Jose, Cycle 360 Racing, Team Brain and Spine - REI, Berg Custom Cycling Wear Women Cycling, Bicycle Advisory Council, Southeast Austin Trail and Greenway Council, Friends of the Lance Armstrong Bikeway, League of Bicycling Voters, Team Six, The Yellow Bike Project, University of Texas at Austin Cycling Club, Capital Pedicab, and Velissimo.

**How many specialty bicycle retailers (i.e., bike shops, not big box retailers like K-Mart or Wal-Mart) are there in your community?**

30

**Are there other bicycling areas or facilities such as BMX tracks, velodromes or mountain bike centers in your community? Please describe.**

Yes - 9th Street BMX, Bouldin Creek BMX, Barton Creek Green Belt, Walnut Creek Greenbelt, McKinney Falls Greenbelt, The Veloway (3 mile bicycle only facility), and a Velodrome is currently being planned by private developers.

**Does your trail system have a unit of the National Mountain Bike Patrol?**

No

**Are there opportunities to rent bicycles in your community or other recreational opportunities involving bicycling?**

Yes

**Please describe**

Most bicycle retailers provide rentals and all bicycle retailers within close proximity to mountain bike trails rent mountain bikes.

**Do you have Safe Routes to School program that includes bicycling?**

Yes

**How many schools are involved?**

Some

**Please describe**

Some schools have Safe Route to School plans which include a bicycle component. The City of Austin is currently working to complete 10 additional plans, with a bicycle component (to be completed May 2007).

**Does your community have youth recreation and intervention programs that are centered around bicycling?**

Yes

**Please describe**

The Yellow Bike Project partners with schools in low income areas to provide after school programs focused on bicycle maintenance and promotion. Children learn to work on and build bikes; they build a bike they keep at the end of the program.

**Do you publish a bike map and keep it up to date?**

Yes

**Please describe**

We update our bike map every year.

**Do you publish a map of mountain bike trails?**

Yes

**Please describe**

The Parks Department publishes maps of public trails.

**Please describe any other efforts in your community to encourage cycling**

All efforts have been previously mentioned, except for a recent community interest in Rails with Trails due to a recently passed commuter rail referendum and recent political support of implementation and inclusion of bicycle facilities for all city projects, where feasible.

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#### Enforcement Section

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**Is your local police department aware of the concerns of cyclists in your community?**



Yes

**Is there a liaison that communicates with the bicycling community?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe**

An Austin Police Department planning/data analyst is the City's resource for bicycling related information and data.

**Do you offer specific training to police officers regarding traffic law as it applies to bicyclists?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe**

Austin Police Department officers are City of Austin employees and therefore are required to take defensive driving every two years, where they are refreshed on traffic laws as they apply to cyclist.

**Do you use targeted enforcement to encourage cyclists and motorists to share the road safely?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe**

In the past, the University of Texas at Austin did targeted enforcement to encourage cyclist and motorist share the road. Those receiving a citation had the option of attending a bicycle defensive driving course, which emphasized sharing the road.

**Do you have public safety employees on bikes?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe**

The Downtown Rangers patrol the central business district on bicycle. The Austin Police Department maintains a bicycle patrol unit. The Austin Parks Police also maintain a bicycle patrol unit.

**Indicate the number of employees on bike as well as the size of the entire staff.**

Combined number of employees on bikes = 75, Combined number of entire staff = 1464

**Do you have a mandatory helmet law?**

Yes

**To what ages does it apply?**

16

**Do you have mandatory sidepath laws?**

No

**If so, what is the status of these laws?**

no answer provided

**Are they enforced**

no answer provided

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#### Evaluation & Planning Section

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**Do you have any information on the number of trips by bike in your community including census data?**

Yes

**Please describe**

The City Demographer compiles, maintains, and reports bicycle commuting information as needed.

**How many cyclist/motor vehicle fatalities have occurred in your community in the past five years?**

7

**How many cyclist/motor vehicle crashes have occurred in your community in the past five years?**

1005

**Do you have any specific plan or program to reduce these numbers?**

Yes

**Do you have a system in place that allows bicyclists to submit ideas and concerns to public officials?**

Yes

**Please describe**

The Bicycle Advisory Council, The Customer Service Request System, The Austin City Council has an open door policy and will meet with constituents regarding bicycling issues, and the City of Austin website.

**Do you have a comprehensive bicycle plan?**

Yes

**When was it passed or updated?**

05/07/1998

**Is it funded?**

Partially

**What percentage has been implemented?**

Some

**Do you have a trails master plan that addresses mountain bike access?**

Yes

**And are there ongoing relations between the mountain biking community and the community recreation and planning staff?**

Yes

**Is your bicycle network part of the broader development plans, land use plans, and ongoing development projects?**

Yes

**How many trails, bike lanes, paved shoulders, bike routes connect with each other to provide a seamless transportation options?**

Most

**Have you evaluated your transportation network and prioritized bicycle improvements based on hazards and needs?**

Yes

**What specific improvements do you have planned for bicycling for the following year?**

A bicycle bridge in a highway corridor, bicycle lanes and wide curb lanes on major arterials, and approximately 4 to 6 barrier removal projects.

**What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?**

**Reason One:**

The City has recently strengthened support for multi-modal transportation, recognizing that a modal split of bicycles, walking, transit, commuter rail, and motor vehicles are the key to sustainable growth. The City has taken action by voting for commuter rail, creating a rail/transit master plan and proactively building bicycle facilities and sidewalks.

**What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?**

**Reason Two:**

The City has, in the past three years, reduced motor vehicle lanes on roadways to install bicycle lanes (San Jacinto Boulevard (Downtown), North loop (Central North Austin), Hancock (Central North Austin), Cameron road (East Austin). The City strives to balance needs of motorists and bicyclists by identify locations having excess vehicular capacity and creating bicycle lanes.

**What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?**

**Reason Three:**

Achieving Bicycle Friendly Community status will provide an opportunity to promote bicycling. Promotion of the use of the bicycle is the key to the successes of many best-practice bicycling cities, such as Portland, Oregon. Portlands former Bicycle Program Coordinator was recently quoted stating "you have to promote the heck out it (cycling)". The Bicycle Friendly Community designation will be newsworthy and give the City a wonderful opportunity to promote cycling.

**What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number One Aspect:**

Highways and highway interchanges tend to be major barriers to bicycling in our community.

**What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number Two Aspect:**

Negative attitudes and perceptions of motorists towards cyclists and visa versa.

**What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number Three Aspect:**

Lack of cohesiveness within the bicycle community; a more cohesive group with identified commonalities would have more strength in building a more bicycle friendly community.